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Tora's JM bushcraft knife

James

- Gear reviews and tests - Edged tools - Fixed blades -



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Description :

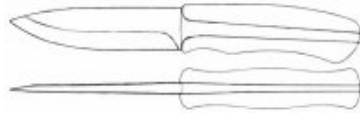
Review and test of Tora "JM bush knife" prototype. and final version.

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I designed this model long ago, for another project and sent the design to Simon from [Tora](#). Simon had a prototype done in Nepal and sent it to me for evaluation.

This was the design:



Design

This is the prototype model as done by the nepalese craftsmen:



The Nepalese version

Handling it is a pleasure. The handle is probably 1/2 cm too short on the prototype, and the sheath has no belt loop, but these problems will be corrected on the final versions. Actually, I like it without the belt loop! The weight of the knife is 160 grams, 190 with the sheath. the blade length is 10.8 cm, width 2.8, thickness at the base 5.5 mm, tapering to 2 at the tip and 4.4 at the ricasso, the handle is 11 cm, the handle is water buffalo horn.

The ergonomics are excellent, the handle section is elliptic, and it provides a safety for push cutting our pulling, even if it does not have a guard. It fits my hand marvellously!

The handle shall be extended a few cm for larger hands, and the sheath will probably have a loop.

The estimated price will be around 25 Pounds, so it is a cheap knife.

Let's test it!



Knife and sheath

Cutting



Cleaning yucca flower stem.



Check the thickness of the blade

I took it to cut a dry yucca flower stem. These things are fibrous. the knife performs very well, and its excellent handle ergonomics help a lot!



It does bite well



More cutting



Making feather sticks

Making feather stick on seasoned wood is no hard task with the Scandinavian grind.

Cooking



Food time.

It is also a good cooking knife. The moderate size makes it handy for cutting veggies, French saucisson, meat, and all camp / bushcraft tasks.

Batoning

Batoning



The batoned branch

The knife is easy to baton. I first cut a branch, it penetrates easilly, and the large blade's back helps transmitting the energy into cutting. (note the lazy break against another trunk method[:]))



Splitting with a baton



Split wood

I then used it to split the branch. Again, excellent behaviour, very good profile for splitting.



Batoning tip first



The traversing tang

I also tried a moderate tip first insertion. I do not know how much it can be done, as the construction is not really designed for this, but It supported at least 20 moderate stokes from the back.

Chopping



Chopping the baton



Hard wood baton chopped.

The knife, though being compact, can be used as a chopping tool, one of the advantages of the handle ergonomics being that it can be held safely at the end of it.

Conclusion



A bushcraft knife in the bush.

My original design was not too bad, but the Nepalese interpretation make it a superb bushcraft knife. The edge holding is good, as the knife went through the tests without problems I have been using it a lot, and the edge is still very good. For the price, I cannot see a serious contender!

UPDATE 9-07-1008

Simon sent me the current version of the knife that corrects the problems I reported:



The new knife The current knife below the prototype.



Bigger !

The current version is bigger: 11.5 cm of blade and 13 of handle. Only 172 grammes instead of 158. The blade tappers to the tip and to the edge, much more than on the prototype, which allows a thinner angled edge, which is good.

The new handle is extremely comfortable in all positions, the tang is glued and pinned, so the construction will be even more resistant. This is a bigger knife, and while the previous was Ok in a pocket, this one is sized for the BIG life, I love it !



The right handle

The sheath is better, with belt loop and a much better construction. Oh, it is not the best sheath I have seen, but there is a layer to protect the sewing from being cut by the blade, and the knife fits very securely in it, it hold the knife in place even upside down, and lets a big part of the handle free for grabbing. Okay, it could be better, the sewing is uneven, the leather of average quality, but it is perfectly functional.



The new sheath

I verified the temper with ferric chloride, and it runs from tip to ricasso, so the whole edge is covered. FeCl₃ shows that the belly portion is the darker, therefore probably also the harder, this is excellent, close to perfection!

The current price at tora is 40 pounds. I find that this is quite reasonable and competitive for a handmade forged knife

Tora's JM bushcraft knife

featuring a quality differential temper, and a buffalo horn handle.